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ABSTRACT

Demographic and economic materials relevant to rural economic development are the focus of this description of the types of information that are collected by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and how this information can be accessed. Information provided on demographic materials includes collection methods--the census, surveys, and administrative records--and the advantages and disadvantages of the three collection methods. It is noted that two types of data are available from the 1990 census--100% data from the short form questionnaire and sample data from the long form questionnaire. The sampling pattern is explained and the types of data available from each questionnaire and data products available for small-area geography are indicated. Current demographic surveys are also described. Information available from the economic censuses (conducted every 5 years), the agriculture census (conducted concurrently with the economic censuses), and "County Business Patterns" is indicated, including reports on geographic areas and industry. Information on how to order materials from the Census Bureau is provided and the availability of Census Bureau data from state and business/industry data centers is indicated. It is noted that data can be purchased from the Census Bureau in several formats, including printed reports, computer tapes, microfiche, technical documentation, and CD-ROMS. (BBM)

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Presentation Text
Information and Rural Economic Development
June 4, 1992
Days Inn, Clarion, Pennsylvania

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"Information, Information Everywhere and Not...,"

I. Introduction

A. The title of my presentation this afternoon, *"Information, Information Everywhere and Not...,"* is very appropriate for the way most of us feel...we know that the information is out there, somewhere, if only we had a clue as to where to look!

B. What I'd like to do for the next hour is share with you what types of information the Census Bureau collects, particularly dealing with rural economic development, and how you can have access to this information.

II. Topics to Cover:

A. Census Bureau Programs

1. Demographic Programs
2. Economic Programs

B. Demographic Programs

1. Census
2. Current Surveys

C. Economic Programs

1. Censuses
2. *County Business Patterns*

D. Where to find all this wonderful stuff in your own backyard!

III. Census Bureau Programs

A. Census Bureau can be divided down the middle into:

1. Demographic Programs
2. Economic Programs

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B. Collection Methods...3 basic methods for collecting data

1. Census... complete count or canvass of a given area...resulting in an enumeration of the entire population.

2. Survey...instead of covering all, covers a sample of persons, housing units, businesses, etc.; and, usually the answers from these people, households, or establishments will be used to represent the entire population.

3. Administrative Records...statistics produced from various registers...birth, death, social security, voters registration, military service, etc.

C. Advantages and Disadvantages of Collection Methods

1. Census

a. Advantages: More geographic detail
More data detail

b. Disadvantages: Costly
Time consuming
Infrequent

2. Survey

a. Advantages: Greater frequency
Not as expensive as census
Can ask more questions

b. Disadvantages: Limited geographic detail, some only Nation as a whole

3. Administrative Records

a. Advantages: Relatively inexpensive
No respondent burden

b. Disadvantages: Limited data items
Limited geography

* To make surveys, estimates, and projections as reliable as possible requires the use of data from a **census** as the benchmark...they are only as good as the census.

IV. Demographic Programs

A. 1990 Census Data...unique because of small-area data

B. Current Surveys

1. Current Population Survey
2. Survey of Income and Program Participation

V. 1990 Census Data

A. 100% and Sample Data

1. The 1990 census used 2 kinds of questionnaires:

a. A short form questionnaire, which contained the 100% or complete-count data items.

b. And a long form questionnaire, which contained the 100% items (7 population, and 6 housing items) plus an additional 26 population and 19 housing items.

B. 1990 Sampling Pattern

1. Sampling rates varied depending on geographic location and population size:

a. For governmental units (cities, places, towns, etc.) under 2,500 population, every other household received a long form (1 in 2 sample).

This was done to increase the accuracy of data in rural areas.

b. Places with an estimated population of more than 2,500 were sampled at a rate of 1 in 6.

c. The exception was in very populous census tracts or block numbering areas which were sampled at a rate of 1 in 8.

2. The overall sampling pattern for the Nation worked out to be about 1 in 6, or some 17,7 million housing units out of 102 million housing units counted in the '90 census.

C. 1990 Data Items

1. 100% Data Items...included such basic population questions as age, sex, marital status, race, Hispanic origin, etc., or housing items such as number of rooms, whether you own or rent, value of your home, monthly rent paid, etc.

2. Sample items included population items like education, disability, labor force, and income...
Examples of housing sample items included shelter costs, telephone, vehicles, and year structure built.

D. Small-Area Geography and Data Products

1. Working with data from the Census Bureau is like the line from the Music Man, *"You've got to know the territory".*

2. We have census statistics for so many different kinds of geographic areas that you are almost certain to find ones that suit your requirements.

3. They range from the United States (the largest) to individual blocks (the smallest).

4. But you have to know which ones fit your analysis and which have data available for your study.

Note: A handy chart that ties geography to specific Census Bureau programs is Figure 4 in Factfinder 8 Census Geography -- Concepts and Products, which is one of your handouts.

E. Small-Area Geography

1. For today, because our focus is on rural economic development, we will limit our discussion to only small-area geographic areas and the data products associated with these areas.

2. We will talk about:

- Census Tracts and Block Numbering Areas
- Block Groups
- Blocks
- User-Defined Areas Program
- ZIP Codes

F. Benchmarks: Counties and Places

1. We'll also spend a few minutes mentioning a few other geographic units you might want to use as benchmarks in your analysis. These are:
   - o Counties
   - o Places

2. Counties

   a. Primary subdivisions of States.

   b. Important coast-to-coast units of analysis because the Census Bureau produces not only population and housing data for counties, but also a wide range of economic and agricultural data for them as well.

3. Places

   a. Another unit of geography important to data users is one that is well-known; generally you recognize it as your community.

   b. We call this unit a "place".

   c. A place represents a significant cluster of people...typically when we speak of a place, we imagine a locality such as Clarion.

G. Now lets take a look at the geographic areas and data products covering these areas that allows us a bird's-eye view of our communities.

1. Census Tracts/Block Numbering Areas

   a. Census tracts and Block Numbering Areas (BNAs) are companion geographic units.

   b. They are geographic divisions of each county.

   c. They differ in origin, but together they cover the entire United States and territories for the 1st time in the 1990 census.

2. Census Tracts

   a. Small statistical subdivisions of metropolitan and other selected counties.

b. They average around 4,000 people and their boundaries usually follow permanent and easily recognizable features (such as highways and streets, rivers, and railroad tracks) as well as county lines.

c. Census tracts are probable the most widely used type of small-area data.

3. Block Numbering Areas

a. BNAs will serve a similar purpose in the '90 census for counties without census tracts.

b. BNAs generally are found in sparsely settled areas, so they tend to be larger in area than their "metro" cousins and contain on, average, fewer than 4,000 people.

Note: These geographic areas are numbered, not named! What I mean by this, is to locate the boundaries of these areas, you must have a map showing Census Bureau geography.

4. Data Products for Census Tracts and BNAs

a. Tracts and BNAs are large enough in population to permit us to publish extensive 1990 sample data in the printed report series, *Population and Housing Characteristics for Census Tracts and Block Numbering Areas.*

Note: 1990 is the first census to publish BNA sample data in the printed report series, along with the sample data for census tracts.

b. For the summary tape files (STFs), census tracts and BNAs will be included on STFs 1A and 2A for 100-percent data items.

c. STFs 3A and 4A for sample data.

d. STFs 1A and 3A are also available on CD-ROM and microfiche.

5. Block Groups

a. The smallest area for which we furnish sample data in standard products is the block group.

b. Block groups (BGs) are subdivisions of census tracts and block numbering areas.

c. Each BG consists of the blocks with numbers having the same initial digit, for example 101, 102, 103, etc. comprise BG 1.

6. Data Products for Block Groups

a. You won't find block group data in any printed report, but we will offer them on microfiche, computer tape, and CD-ROM.

b. STF 1A for the 100% data items

c. STF 3A for the sample data items

d. Both will be available in all 3 media...microfiche, tape, and CD.

Note: BGs take the place of enumeration districts (EDs) in areas for which we provided ED data in prior censuses.

7. Blocks

a. Blocks are the smallest geographic area for which the Census Bureau tabulates data.

b. Their small size dictates, though, that we can furnish only 100-percent data for them.

Note: New for 1990 is that census blocks have been identified for the entire U.S. and its territories. The result is that there are more small geographic areas for data users to aggregate than ever before -- approximately 7 million blocks.

c. Census blocks come in all shapes and sizes. For example , a census block may be a typical 4-sided city block or cover many square miles in a rural area.

8. Data Products for Blocks

a. Block statistics are not printed -- the cost of printing data for an estimated 7 million blocks would be too high.

b. Block statistics are available on STF 1B in total, and extracts of !B are available on CD-ROM and microfiche.

Note: When we say extracts of 1B, we mean that all blocks will have data available for them but the data items will be limited.

Instead of the over 90 tables available from STF 1B, there will be around 25 data items on the STF 1B extracts.

9. UDAP...User-Defined Areas Program

   a. The 1990 User-Defined Areas Program, UDAP, is a custom data product that is available for locally defined geographic areas that do not correspond to standard census geographic areas.

   b. Data users will identify the geographic areas of interest to them by compiling census blocks.

   c. These areas must be aggregations of "whole" census blocks and must satisfy a population-size criteria for confidentiality.

   d. The Census Bureau will then create a set of predefined tables of information, very similar to the census tract and BNA reports, for these user-defined areas.

   e. The program includes tables, maps, and a text as standard products on a user-fee basis. Narrative profiles are also available at additional cost.

   Note: UDAP replaces the 1980 Neighborhood Statistics Program.

10. ZIP Codes and Data Products

   a. Census data presented by ZIP Code are also popular, particularly with business people, for small-area analysis.

   b. 1990 census sample data will be summarized for 5-digit ZIP's throughout the country on computer tape, STF 3B, and CD-ROM.

   Note: There will be no printed report series for ZIP Code data.

As you can already see, there is a lot you can learn about an area from census statistics. But what kinds of information does the Bureau collect more frequently than every 10 years?

VI. Current Demographic Surveys

A. Current Population Survey

1. Conducted monthly and covers 70,000 households.

2. Data used by Bureau of Labor Statistics to calculate the monthly unemployment rate.

3. Asks periodic supplemental questions (in addition to employment), e.g. income questions in March, school enrollment in October, fertility in June, and voter registration in November of national election years.

B. Survey of Income and Program Participation

1. Approximately 10,000 households are interviewed each month.

2. It is a very detailed survey with the "core" questions collecting data on income, and the types of cash or noncash benefits respondents receive.

Note: With both these surveys...very little, if any, local or small-area data...but important for showing national trends.

VII. Economic Programs

A. Economic Censuses

B. Census of Agriculture

C. *County Business Patterns*

VIII. Economic Censuses

A. Collected every 5 years, in years ending in "2" and "7"

B. Covers major economic sectors:

- Retail Trade
- Wholesale Trade
- Service Industries
- Transportation Industries
- Manufactures
- Mineral Industries
- Construction Industries

C. Report Series

1. Geographic Area Series

a. General statistics for states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA), counties, places of 2500+ inhabitants, ZIP codes

b. For Construction and Mineral Industries area series, the states are grouped in nine reports covering the geographic "divisions".

2. Industry Series

a. Provide detail about specific industries in manufactures, mining and construction, primarily at the National level.

b. Retail trade, wholesale, service industries, do not have an industry series.

IX. Census of Agriculture

A. Since 1982, has been conducted concurrently with the economic censuses.

B. Covers all farms.

C. County level data on:

- Land Use and Ownership
- Crops and Livestock
- Value of Sales
- Fertilizers and Chemicals
- Production Expenses

X. *County Business Patterns*

A. Data on:

- Almost all Industries
- Number of Establishments
- Employment
- Payroll

B. Presented for every county in U.S.

XI. How to Access this Information...Where to Find this Wonderful Stuff in My Own Backyard!

A. How Do I Order Census Bureau Products?

1. U.S. Government Printing Office

   a. Most printed reports are sold through GPO.

   b. To order, you will need the GPO stock number, a 12-digit code that identifies the particular report.

   c. This information is available in the order forms, in the Catalog, or you can call Customer Services (301/763-4200) for help in locating the number.

2. Census Bureau

   a. You can purchase computer tapes, microfiche, technical documentation, CD-ROMs, and other products through our Customer Services.

   b. Customer Services also sells microfiche of out-of-print Census Bureau reports going back to 1968.

   c. Philadelphia regional office of the Census Bureau:

      Dave Lewis
      Information Services Specialist
      105 South 7th Street
      Philadelphia, PA 19106
      215/597-8864

      Dave gives workshops and presentations on all Census Bureau data products...one of the most useful workshops for librarians is the workshop on "how to" use CDs...please contact Dave for more information.

B. Other Sources of Census Bureau Data

1. State Data Centers

   a. This program numbers over 1,400 organizations across the country.

b. The organizations participating in this program are generally state or local government agencies, libraries, and academic centers.

c. What they have in common is that they work closely with the Census Bureau in disseminating information.

d. In Pennsylvania, the lead agency is:

Michael Behney, Institute of State and Regional Affairs
Pennsylvania State University-at-Harrisburg
Middletown, PA 17057
717/948-6336
(SDC/BIDC)

e. In addition, each state has a network of affiliate data centers that provide information locally.

For example, the nearest SDC contact to Clarion is:

Institute for Research and Community Affairs
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
414/357-2251

f. Another SDC affiliate is:

John Geschwindt
State Library of Pennsylvania
Forum Bldg.
Harrisburg, PA 17120
717/787-2327

Speaking of the State Library, let me tell you about another program called ***Access Pennsylvania***. This program is sponsored out of the State Library and has about 1000 libraries across the State participating in the goal of putting their holdings on to CDs (compact disk). Participating libraries have the CD reader-players.

2. Business/Industry Data Centers

a. The Bureau launched a new program, the Business/Industry Data Center (BIDC)in February of 1988.

b. The aim of the project was to benefit State economies by helping data users, especially in the business community, obtain and use the broad array of statistics relevant to

business activity.

c. The BIDC program is an outgrowth of the State Data Center Program and is similar in design.

d. Clarion University is a BIDC affiliate and the contact is:

Roger Horn, Librarian
814/226-2303

XII. Conclusion

A. I know that we covered a lot of information in a relatively short time...at least, I hope that it didn't seem like I have been up here speaking forever and 3 days!

B. Hope this has given you a better idea of what the Census Bureau has to offer for rural economic development.